

Ronaldo crowned the most marketable footballer globally

London, 28/05/14 – Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo is the most marketable footballer according to the latest rankings released today by global sports marketing research experts Repucom.

Argentina's Lionel Messi comes in second with a surprise entry from Spain's Gerard Piqué completing the top three.

The ranking was created using Repucom's Celebrity DBI tool which measures the perceptions of over 6,500 people in 13 international markets, representing the views of more than 1.5 billion people. As a result, the top 10 rankings illustrate a truly global identification of the most marketable players today.

Having won his second FIFA Ballon d'Or earlier in 2014, Cristiano Ronaldo has secured his place as the current best player and now as the most well-known and best 'trend-setting' footballer today.

Globally, 83.9% of people know of the Portuguese star and in markets such as Italy, Spain, Germany, Turkey and Argentina, this figure is above 95%. Ronaldo is also seen as the best trendsetter of all the players with 82.5% of people saying he reflects today's trends in society.

Four-time Ballon d'Or winner, Lionel Messi ranked in second and as the world's best paid player, with earnings of around \$27.5 million per year, the Argentine's endorsement and likeability scores continue to rank him highly.

Paul Smith, Founder and CEO of Repucom said: "With just over two weeks to go before the 2014 FIFA World Cup kicks off, the world's gaze is firmly on the competing teams and players. The World Cup is the most watched sporting event in the world and as such, big brands, official partners or otherwise, will and are using its global appeal to drive sales.

"Endorsements of celebrities and in this case footballers have an incredibly powerful way of doing just that creating an emotional connection with a brand. The star can raise awareness and create a buzz for brands and products at a time when breaking through the marketing clutter that surrounds such huge events is critical for commercial success.

"Ronaldo is an endorser's dream. His value is as important to the teams he plays for as they are for the companies that endorse him. Global awareness of Ronaldo is what drives his commercial power and with over 82 million facebook likes and 26 million Twitter followers, he is also one of the most liked in the business."

A surprise entry at number three is the Spanish defender Gerard Piqué. As a player, he has already won everything in the game including three UEFA Champions League trophies, two of which in consecutive years with two different clubs as well as the FIFA World Cup in 2010. His relationship with international music star Shakira has meant that the defender enjoys a heightened level of global public awareness. Over 58% of people know of Piqué globally and of them, over three quarters say they like him. In his native Spain, this figure is over 97% of the population.

Fernando Torres is another surprise inclusion. The Spaniard's global notoriety especially in markets like China have contributed to making him the third most recognized player globally. Other entries in the top 10 include Brazil's Neymar Jr, England's Wayne Rooney and Sweden's Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

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Notes to Editors

Repucom's Celebrity DBI measures the perceptions of 16-69 year olds in 13 markets including Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Spain, Turkey, the UK and the US, representing the views of more than 1.5 billion people. In June 2014, this figure will increase as Repucom's Celebrity DBI launches into Japan and Australia.

Repucom's Celebrity DBI defines marketability by evaluating eight contributing attributes including the awareness, appeal, breakthrough, trendsetter influence, trust, endorsement and aspiration of and for the celebrity.

The tool currently monitors over 5,000 celebrities, including athletes, film and TV stars, musical performers, business leaders and personalities.

Rank	Player	DBI Score	Global Awareness	Facebook Likes* (May 2014)	Twitter Followers (May 2014)
1	Cristiano Ronaldo	79.49	83.87%	82M	26M
2	Lionel Messi	75.87	76.07%	57M	2M (inactive)
3	Gerard Piqué	62.90	58.08%	12M	8M
4	Fernando Torres	62.69	59.64%	3M	2M
5	Wayne Rooney	59.47	55.82%	20M	9M
6	Andrés Iniesta	59.47	52.82%	20M	9M
7	Neymar Jr	59.36	53.33%	22M	11M
8	Iker Casillas	59.09	49.43%	18M	1M
9	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	59.07	55.81%	15M	1M
10	Thierry Henry	57.56	51.62%	16M	300K

TOP 10 MOST MARKETABLE FOOTBALLERS IN THE WORLD

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DBI SCORE 57.56
THIERRY HENRY

Henry is the third highest goal scorer in the English Premier League's history and having enjoyed spells with Monaco, Arsenal and FC Barcelona, he benefits from global appeal and familiarity. His international profile was strengthened in 2010 when he moved to the US, signing for the New York Red Bulls, where he remains as captain.

With the French national team, Henry has lifted the FIFA World Cup and European Championship and although now retired from international duty, he remains France's all-time leading goal scorer and is their second most capped player.

At 36 he may be nearing the end of his playing career, but his notoriety puts Henry into the top ten rankings. Known by 51.62% of people globally, he is, commercially speaking, still a major contender. Most recently he announced a multi-year partnership for Puma, estimated to be worth over \$1m per year, as his performance and lifestyle footwear and apparel sponsor.

Picture © Mike Strobe/AFP



DBI SCORE 59.07
ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC

Zlatan Ibrahimovic is the most marketable footballer not to be heading to Brazil for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, as his native Sweden failed to qualify for the tournament. The charismatic star is one of the most decorated players in the world at club level, having won a total of 10 league titles with six clubs in four countries including FC Barcelona, AC Milan and Paris Saint-Germain.

A talisman for club and country, outspoken Ibrahimovic is never far from the limelight and is almost as well known for his one-liners and self-confidence as for his titles. He is the sixth most famous footballer globally, and 74.67% of the people who know of him say that he is an influential voice in today's world. Major deals with Volvo and most recently Nike's 'Dare to Zlatan' campaign certainly prove his marketability. His Nike endorsement is estimated to be worth around \$3m per year.

Picture © Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP



DBI SCORE 59.09
IKER CASILLAS



As captain of both Real Madrid and Spain, goalkeeper Iker Casillas has won everything at international and domestic levels of the game. His playing position in goal is probably a key factor keeping him from ranking more highly.

The Spanish captain is the 15th most famous footballer globally, with just over 49% of people knowing of him. However, among those people that do know of him, Casillas ranks within the top three players globally in seven of the eight attributes against which a player's marketability is measured. Of that figure, over 83% say they find him appealing and more than 84% aspire to be like him. He is the second most trusted footballer globally and third most influential. These traits are reflected in the endorsements he has secured, the biggest of which is his deal with adidas estimated to be worth approximately \$1.5m per year.

Picture © Yuri Cortez / AFP

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At 22, Neymar is one of the rising stars of international football and the most famous Brazilian player globally. His big money move to FC Barcelona in May 2013 marked a giant leap in terms of his notoriety as a global superstar. Nike had already recognized his marketing clout in 2011 when the brand signed him to an 11-year endorsement deal worth today an estimated \$7m per year. Red Bull's sponsorship of the Brazilian is worth an estimated \$2m per year.

Neymar's flair, skill and technique are matched by his goal scoring ability for 2014 FIFA World Cup host nation Brazil, one of the world's best-known teams, for whom he has scored 30 goals in his first 47 matches. He is already a very influential spokesperson with over 81% of the 53.33% of people that know of him globally saying so.

DBI SCORE 59.36
NEYMAR JR.



Picture © Elsa / AFP

DBI SCORE 59.47 ANDRÉS INIESTA



Over 52% of people globally know of Iniesta and of that group, over 80% say the midfielder impacts on their purchasing intent and brand consideration. Having scored the winning goal at the 2010 FIFA World Cup finals, FC Barcelona's playmaker went on to help Spain lift the European Championship in 2012, as he had done in 2008, and has since become one of the most popular Spanish athletes, boasting around 20 million Facebook fans.

His fame has been bolstered by winning six La Liga titles, three UEFA Champions League trophies and two FIFA Club World Cups with FC Barcelona, making him one most decorated players in the history of a club that he joined at the young age of 12.

Deals with Nike, estimated to be worth approximately \$1m per year, EA Sports and Kalise have maintained his high profile internationally. His appearances in Sony commercials most recently have helped show his sense of humour, a key trait in making him one of the world's fourth most liked player.

Picture © Jose Jordan/AFP

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DBI SCORE 59.47 WAYNE ROONEY

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Since signing for Manchester United in 2004, Rooney has become the club's third highest all-time top goal scorer and one of the English Premier League's top strikers for over a decade.

Manchester United's global appeal and large international fan base have helped to raise Rooney's personal profile. Over 55% of people globally know of the 28-year-old striker, keeping his marketability high. He boasts major deals with global brands such as Nike (worth an estimated \$4m per year), HarperCollins and Samsung. In his native England, Rooney has appeared on six consecutive covers of the UK version of Electronic Arts' FIFA series.

Rooney is prolific on social media, with around 20 million Facebook and 8.5 million Twitter followers, and his engagement with fans fuels his appeal.

Picture © Glyn Kirk/AFP



DBI SCORE 62.69
FERNANDO TORRES

Although he has perhaps not shown the same winning form for his current club, Chelsea, that he did for Liverpool and Atlético Madrid previously, Fernando Torres is still a marketing force to be reckoned with on a global level. Almost 60% of people know of the striker, making him the third most recognized player globally.

Torres has won the European Championship twice as well as the FIFA World Cup and UEFA Champions League, and he has had major deals with adidas, worth an estimated \$1.5m per year, and Pepsi. Of those people that do know of him, 79% say he is an aspirational role model and 78% say he is an influential spokesperson. Appearances in music videos as well as cameo roles in films have also helped to show the player's appeal and commercial diversity.

Picture © Nelson Almeida / AFP



DBI SCORE 62.90
GERARD PIQUÉ



Having lifted three UEFA Champions League trophies, two of which in consecutive years with two different club (Manchester United and FC Barcelona), Gerard Piqué boasts a large trophy cabinet which also includes the FIFA World Cup, one Premier League and four La Liga titles.

His relationship with international music star Shakira has meant that the defender enjoys a heightened level of global public awareness. Over 58% of people know of Piqué globally and of them, over three in four people say they like him. In his native Spain, this figure is over 97% of the population. One of the stars of Nike's new 'Risk Everything' campaign, Piqué often projects the image of a cheerful family man and this quality along with his fame boosts his marketability, making him an incredibly aspirational, influential and trusted public figure.

Picture © Miguel Medina / AFP

DBI SCORE 75.87 LIONEL MESSI

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Regarded by many as the best player in the world, four-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi has won two FIFA Club World Cups, six La Liga titles, three Champions League trophies and Olympic gold with his native Argentina in 2008. Amongst an extensive list of records, the 26 year old has also netted over 350 goals for his club FC Barcelona, making him the club's all-time record goal scorer.

Messi's latest deal to keep him at the club has made him the world's best paid player, earning the forward around \$27.5m per year.

His off-the-pitch qualities are similarly impressive. As well as making a number of charitable donations, Messi is also an ambassador for UNICEF and the most liked players in football today. He is known of by over 76% of people globally, making him one of the top endorsers not just in football, but in sport. Messi's commercial activities include deals with Turkish Airlines and adidas (worth an estimated \$2m and \$9m per year), Dolce & Gabbana and Pepsi as well as numerous domestic deals, such as for a Japanese face wash product and for messaging applications in China. The Argentine's 57 million Facebook fans highlight just how appealing a commercial entity he is today.

Picture © Daniel Mihalescu/AFP



DBI SCORE 79.49 CRISTIANO RONALDO

Having won his second FIFA Ballon d'Or earlier in 2014, Cristiano Ronaldo has secured his place as the current best player in the world. He is also the most well-known and marketable player today.

Globally, 83.87% of people know of the Portuguese star and in markets such as Italy, Spain, Germany, Turkey and Argentina, this figure is above 95%. Ronaldo is also seen as the best trendsetter globally of all the players with 82.45% of people saying he reflects today's trends in society.

After leaving Manchester United in 2009 where he won three English Premier League titles, one FIFA Club World Cup and one UEFA Champions League trophy with the club, Ronaldo joined Real Madrid for what was then a world record transfer fee (approx. \$135m), helping the Spanish giants to lift the La Liga title in 2012.

On the pitch, Ronaldo's emotions are never very far from the surface, an element which helps to humanize the star. Over 72% of people who know of the player globally say that they like him. With his hard work ethic, the Portuguese captain has also become a model footballer.

Having played and won major trophies with two of the most famous football clubs in two of the most popular leagues in the world, Ronaldo has become a global superstar and his marketing endorsements reflect his fame. Deals ranging across a wide range of companies such as Emporio Armani, Herbalife, KFC as well as an estimated \$9.5m per year deal with Nike and a \$2.5m deal with Fly Emirates have all added to Ronaldo's global profile as an aspirational and influential product and brand endorser.

As a sign of his marketability, over one million Real Madrid shirts with Ronaldo's name printed on the back were sold in 2013.

Ronaldo's charity work is also well documented. His attributes both on the field and off it combine to make him the most marketable player in the world today.

Picture © Jonathan Nackstrand/ AFP



About Repucom

Repucom is a global leader in sports marketing research. Utilizing the leading technology and facilities for market research, media evaluation and commercial auditing, Repucom has created the industry's first global, full-service portfolio for sports marketing research and consultancy. The company provides a single, independent source of holistic market data and insights to help its clients achieve value in their marketing and sponsorship activities.

Since its founding in 2004, Repucom has become established as the research provider of choice for over 1,000 of the top rights holders, brands, agencies and broadcasters in sports and entertainment worldwide.

Repucom merged successfully with SPORT+MARKT in 2010 and later completed the acquisition of fellow industry pioneers IFM Sports, including IFM Sports Marketing Surveys.

In 2013, the companies were united under the Repucom brand, bringing together over 1,400 employees in 20 wholly-owned and operated offices worldwide. Later that year, Repucom acquired Milan-based sports marketing agency Imagine & Sport, which was renamed as Repucom Italia. The combined business draws on more than 25 years of experience and accumulated insights.

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